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ABSTRACT

With the theory that social and personal values influence the conduct of evaluation studies in education, the author discusses the impact of two major sources of such values--contextual factors, including political, social and organizational influences; and the terminology, models, and personal values of evaluators. Alternative purposes for an evaluation study are discussed and illustrated. In addition, values hidden in terminology, value-laden evaluation models, an evaluators' personal values and an illustration of evaluator roles are treated. The benefits and problems of values are discussed and four means of clarifying values in evaluation work are outlined. The first approach suggests that all relevant value positions need to be identified and stated publicly. The second approach emphasized the need to clarify the evaluator's role in the assessment process. Is he/she describing the program, recommending evaluation criteria, or rendering an actual judgment of worth? Through identifying his/her role, the evaluator can choose to de-emphasize his or her personal values. The third approach suggests explicitly incorporating opposed values into evaluation studies by conducting comparative analysis. The fourth approach reflects attempts to search out conflicting value positions to insure an appreciation of the full range of potentially influential values. (Author/JAC)

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SOURCES OF VALUES INFLUENCING EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

No. 7

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Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

May 1977

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ABSTRACT

Sources of Values Influencing Educational Evaluation

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Social and personal values from a multitude of sources influence the conduct of evaluation studies in education. This paper discusses the impact of two major sources of such values: (a) contextual factors in evaluation studies, including the political role of evaluations, current social movements and organizational influences, and (b) evaluators themselves, including evaluators' terminology, models, and personal values. The influences of values on the purposes of evaluation studies and on evaluator roles are discussed as illustrative examples. Finally, four means of clarifying values in evaluation work are identified.

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SOURCES OF VALUES INFLUENCING EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

> We may thus expect that while personality factors will give rise to variations in individual value systems, cultural, institutional, and social factors will nevertheless restrict such variation to a reasonably small number, perhaps a few million. (Rokeach, 1968-1969, p. 552)

Myriad value judgments of what is good or ideal arise from these millions of value systems to influence the design and conduct of every evaluation study in education. Social movements, political pressure groups, organizational influences and standard evaluation techniques are some of the sources of these value systems which support the pervasive but largely unrecognized, unchallenged judgments of the quality of evaluation. Improving educational evaluation as a form of both scientific inquiry and social service requires a better understanding of how these implicit judgments shape evaluative activities.

As practitioners, evaluators are often preoccupied with making value judgments about an educational program's effectiveness, while seldom conscious of the more subtle value judgments which launch and guide the evaluation study itself. But it is sometimes important for funding agencies, clients, audiences, and especially the evaluators themselves to be aware of these latter judgments. Such groups need to know what was left out of an evaluation study, and why, as well as what was included in it. As theorists, evaluators need to understand how evaluation studies are part of a larger socio-political enterprise of competing value systems. As an initial step in understanding the role of values in evaluation, I will highlight in the following pages the major sources of values which influence how and why evaluation studies are conducted.

Discussing the role of values in evaluation is best done from as neutral a stance as possible towards evaluation itself. As argued by Scriven (1972), it seems most beneficial to define evaluation as broadly and neutrally as possible without the definition implying in what ways evaluation is appropriate/inappropriate, useful/not useful, desirable/undesirable, or ethical/unethical. Such judgments should be based on a consideration of relevant value positions in specific

evaluation settings. Since it is misleading to group these evaluative concerns as part of the definition of evaluation, evaluation is defined here as simply the assessment of worth. Subsequent discussions of competing value systems will illustrate how the same study may be considered exemplary, trivial, or unethical, depending on one's value perspective.

THE NATURE OF VALUES IN EVALUATION WORK

Value Definitions

Although evaluation by definition deals with values, the literature of educational evaluation contains little treatment of how one identifies, conceptualizes, or operationalizes values in evaluation work. In fact, the term "values" remains vague and ambiguous. Berlak (1970), for example, defines value as a

> belief or conjunction of beliefs which guide human behavior. Moral values differ in that they are beliefs that establish ideals or standards for action. Thus vigilantism has been called a common value to most Americans...but the latter is not a moral value. Equality, honesty, and human dignity would be classified as moral values. (p. 266)

Hodgkinson (1970), in studying organizational influences on value systems, defines value as "a conception of the desirable" (p. 46). He distinguishes between values and attitudes which are defined as "predispositions to act towards referents in a consistent manner. Attitudes then are the manifest or overt indicants of value" (p. 46). Rokeach (1968-1969), a senior researcher in the field of values and attitudes, states that

> there is still very little consensus about the exact conceptual difference between an attitude and a value; we sometimes employ these two concepts interchangeably and sometimes differentially. We sometimes employ them in the singular and sometimes in the plural, as if we have not yet learned how to count them. (pp. 549-550)

Finally, Goulet (1971) has succinctly summarized the problem as follows:

> in common discourse, "values" refer in a general way to attitudes, preferences, life-styles, normative frameworks, symbolic universes, belief systems, and networks of meaning men give to life. Sociologists, psychologists, philosophers, and others have always had great difficulty in defining the term with precision. (p. 205)

Scriven (1967) has assisted evaluators with this definitional problem; he discusses three types of value judgments, arguing that they have a proper place in evaluation, cannot be disregarded, and should not be used to demean evaluation as non-scientific. The first type of value judgments are simply statements about personal preferences or matters of taste. These statements can be established or refuted by showing whether or not someone holds them. The second type of value judgments are those related to the assessment of comparative merit or worth. Such judgments assess whether or not individuals hold certain comparative statements to be true and whether or not the statements are, in fact, true; e.g., whether or not one product is better than another. These value judgments Scriven describes as being complex combinations of various performance ratings and weightings of performance criteria. This is the kind of judgment most frequently employed by evaluators to assess a program's effectiveness.

The third type of value judgment, and those of major concern here, are those in which the criteria themselves are debatable or wherein the question of what is good is at issue. These judgments are not considerations of what is, in fact, actual, but of what is to be considered good or ideal. Much of the form and focus of current evaluation work is determined by implicit value judgments of this type. Upon inspection, one can identify value positions inherent in both general evaluation methodology and in the contexts of specitic studies which dictate which evaluation activities are to be considered desirable.

Situational Nature of Values

Although there are broad dominant values which affect all evaluation studies, the influence of many values is situation specific. Worthen (1972) has noted that

> the various [evaluation] models are built on differing--often conflicting--conceptions and definitions of evaluation, with the end result that practitioners are led in very different directions, depending upon which model they follow. (p. 3)

I believe the divergence of these evaluation models reflects the highly contextual nature of evaluation work and results from models being developed for differing purposes and contexts. Focusing attention more directly on local values and conditions should therefore facilitate understanding how evaluation studies are conducted.

Gowin (1973) has suggested that whatever regularities researchers find in educational phenomena are there as a result of human beings acting within a social context. More traditional approaches to scientific investigation, such as that discussed by Platt (1964), presuppose that the phenomena being studied have a natural stability. Gowin argues that such approaches to science serve as poor models for educational research because the phenomena of interest in education are dynamic rather than stable. Educational phenomena are produced by deliberate choice and are mutable, not immutable. He argues that regularities do exist in educational phenomena, but calls them artifactual to stress that the regularities are man-made, and not due to underlying laws of nature. Gowin maintains that educational research should be concerned with isolating the empirical consistencies found in what are actually artifactual regularities arising in education from the interaction of human beings in specific social contexts. Educational research should not be concerned with the search for underlying immutable laws of nature.

Cronbach (1975) has made a similar argument about psychological research. He argues that research in psychology should attempt to describe and evaluate a given problem afresh in each new setting, attending heavily to local characteristics. One should concentrate on local conditions, not generalization.

> The goal of our work, I have argued here, is not to amass generalizations atop which a theoretical tower can some day be erected...The special task of the social scientist in each generation is to pin down the contemporary facts. Beyond that, he shares with the humanistic scholar and the artist in the effort to gain insight into

> contemporary relationships, and to realign the culture's view of man with present realities. To know man as he is, is no mear aspiration. (Cronbach, 1975, p. 126)

Such an admonition applies equally well in evaluative research.

Understanding why evaluations are conducted as they are requires greater sensitivity to those specific values which influence the formation of evaluation studies in individual settings. The first task then is to identify the sources of dominant values in various evaluation settings. In the following pages I identify several major sources of values and discuss their general influence on the nature of evaluation work in education.

SOURCES OF VALUES IN AN EVALUATION'S CONTEXT

Several sources of values which influence an evaluation study can be identified upon examining an evaluation's context or setting. These sources are aspects of the socio-political milieu within which the evaluation is conducted. Such sources include relevant political groups, current social movements, and organizational influences.

Evaluation Contexts

Gowin and Millman (1969) have defined a "context of inquiry" to include "the scene of phenomena of interest, telling questions and principles of evidence, key concepts and conceptual systems, basic assumptions and presuppositions" (p. 554). They suggest that analyzing the scene of any research area will reveal pervasive qualities which will help determine the direction of the research. When the elements of the context of inquiry are analyzed, it is possible to expose the basic assumptions and presuppositions of the inquiry.

In evaluation, House (1973a) has discussed the role of values in three types of context in formal evaluation: the context of evaluation, the context of justification, and the context of persuasion. The context of evaluation, according to House, refers to the basic value positions responsible for the genesis of the evaluation and includes all the motivations, biases, attitudes, and pressures from which the evaluation arose.

The context of justification is reflected in the attempts made to justify findings. While there are many ways of justifying findings, in formal educational evaluation such justification usually involves the methodology of the social sciences, principally psychology, in collecting and analyzing data. House regards most evaluations as operating within the context of justification.

House also discusses the context of persuasion, noting that producing data is one thing and getting it used is quite another. Because of the political process within which evaluation usually operates, the context of justification (i.e., the use of social science values and methods) does not insure that evaluation results have social utility. Factors related to the context of persuasion largely determine whether or not evaluation results get used. Although evaluators frequently neglect the context of persuasion, they must assume some responsibility for their information being properly understood and used.

I define the context of an evaluation study to include the several classes of situational influences or conditions relevant to a full description of the environment or setting of the evaluation study. Such conditions or influences certainly vary across evaluation studies but include both broad factors, such as:

social convention,
historical background and tradition,
economic climate,
legal precedents,
current political issues,
dominant religious and philosophic orientations,
social movements,

and more specific factors, such as:

control of evaluation resources,
authority and decision processes,
funding directives and contractual obligations,
expectations about evaluation activities and outcomes,
timing of evaluation work, and
desires of client groups.

The explicit and implicit values arising from these sources result in value judgments by funders, clients, and evaluators as to what is the desirable or proper form of an evaluation study.

Such factors exist in all evaluation studies, but the relative impact of any specific factor must be determined anew in each evaluation setting. While social convention or control of resources may exert an

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overriding influence on the form of some evaluation studies, they may have negligible impact in other evaluation settings. Which values most influence evaluation studies vary substantially from setting to setting.

Keeping in mind the situational nature of such value influences, let us now consider in turn three primary sources of values within an evaluation's context: the political aspects of evaluation work, the influence of social movements, and organizational influences.

Political Aspects of Evaluation

Cohen (1970) has warned that lack of attention to evaluation context can result in biased and irrelevant criteria, questions, and data. He notes that the evaluation of social action programs is only secondarily a scientific endeavor; "first and foremost it is an effort to gain politically significant information on the consequences of political acts" (pp. 236-237).

The conflicts arising from different value bases are frequently described as the "political" aspects of evaluation. Considerable writing has been done on political settings and political influences on evaluation work. House (1973a), for example, talks about the political pressures (value interests) which initiate most evaluation studies.

> My point is that evaluations are not inspired by the heartfelt need of professionals to try to do a better job (frequent though that rhetoric is); rather, the impetus is usually traceable to a pressure group with a specific aim. (p. 128)

In discussing the differing political value bases which underlie the initiation of evaluation studies and influence evaluation activities, House identifies the use of evaluations for attack, for defense, and evaluations initiated as a matter of form--symbolic gestures that are interpreted as such by the recipient of the funds. He notes that the primary problem with all these evaluations is not their lack of rigorous, scientific methodology, but the fact that they were never intended to produce relevant information. Evaluations for attack are generally more carefully done, he says, because they are trying to change things rather than to defend an established position.

Weiss (1973), who is also concerned with the political nature of evaluation, cites three ways in which evaluation work and politics intermingle:

> policies concerning the programs being evaluated are proposed, debated, enacted, funded, and implemented through political processes,
>
> evaluation is frequently undertaken in order to assist decision-making and, therefore, its reports enter the political arena,
>
> evaluation, by its own nature, has a political stance in terms of what it legitimizes and the evaluator's appropriate role in policy and program formation.

In Weiss' opinion, only the evaluator who is sensitive to the political elements of the evaluation situation can be as creative and strategically useful as he or she should be. She notes that because of the political context within which programs originate and operate, political considerations can daily shape the work of the program, and, therefore, shape the concept of what it means to evaluate the program. Values which mold evaluation activities originate in such political sources as ideological preferences, congressional support, public appraisal, competitors, client dissatisfaction, and media coverage. Since evaluation activities may serve decision making, they enter the political arena, can be used for political purposes, and are subject to political pressures.

Weiss mentions that one way political values influence evaluation studies is by limiting investigation to the effects of the experimental variables which the program manipulates. Such limitation conveys the message that other facets of the program are either unimportant or fixed and unchangeable. Such exclusive emphasis on a program's intervention components leads to a disregard for other important components, such as the social and institutional structures within which the program operates and the values of potential target groups. Thus politically relevant values can take precedence over other value orientations.

Social Movements

Social movements in education, such as the accountability movement, systems management movement, and the behavioral objectives movement are another significant source of values which determine how evaluations are conducted. These movements are broad, essentially value-based, orientations that prescribe "proper" evaluation approaches.

House (1973b) has attacked the primary value base of the accountability movement: economic rationality. "For the dominant theme today is economic efficiency and its purpose is control--control over the behavior of pupils, control over the behavior of the staff, control over the schooling" (p. 261). House suggests that this value orientation presumes that the purpose of education is to supply manpower to other institutions in society, that educational goals are set primarily by technological demands, and that these goals should be met by educators with the greatest efficiency possible. He argues that such educational goals are ultimately economic and the attendant accountability is also economic. The principles and values of economic efficiency thus shape both the accountability system and the nature of education.

House contrasts this economic orientation with a more humanistic education, in which schools are assessed in terms of what they do for people, independent of their contribution to other social institutions. He critiques the basic guiding principles of the accountability movement showing that they are simply ideological value assumptions, not the outgrowth of empirical or historical research. While the accountability movement may essentially be a value-based endeavor not supported by scientific evidence or methodology, there is little doubt that the movement's attendant values of prespecification, replication, quantification, and elimination of ambiguity have had a substantial impact on present evaluation methods.

Likewise, systems management procedures, in many ways similar to some evaluation models, have been attacked because of their basic value positions. In discussing the values evident in, and perpetuated through, such supposedly scientific procedures as systems management, Apple (1972) notes how the "systems" language performs a political function by convincing others of the sophisticated state of the field

of education and by evoking tacit meanings from the general audience that are basically supportive of a quasi-scientific belief system. He points out that order and consensus are extremely important for proper functioning of systems management procedures; conflict and disorder are antithetical to a smoothly functioning system. But, "the fact that conflict and disorder are extraordinarily important to prevent the reification of institutional patterns of actions is, thus, ignored" (p. 14).

> It should be clear, then, that systems approaches are not essentially neutral, nor are they only performing a "scientific" function. By tending to cause its users and the other publics involved to ignore certain possible fundamental problems with schools as institutions, systems management also acts to generate and channel political sentiments supportive of the existing modes of access to knowledge and power. (p. 15)

Apple further points out that behavioral objectives and similar behavioristic rationales are generally treated as if they were logically founded and scientifically arguable, instead of what they really are: expressions of a dominant, industrialized consciousness that seeks certainty above all else.

> That is, they are social and ideological configurations stemming from and mirroring a set of basic rules of thought that are part of the taken-for-granted reality of curriculum workers and other educators. The reality inclines us to search for relatively easy ways to eliminate the human dilemmas (even mysteries) of dealing with diversity and alternative conceptions of valued activity. (p. 17)

Apple suggests that systems management procedures actually enable institutional managers to avoid conflicts over basic values by making choices within the limited framework of existing modes of interaction and by precluding questions about the basis of the structure itself. Using scientific terminology this way serves to de-emphasize value conflicts and to portray decisions as factual or reality-based judgments.

Social movements, then, such as the behavioral objectives and accountability movements are sources of values which foster hospitable climates for only certain kinds of evaluation methodologies. The

expectations arising from such social values clearly constrain the evaluator's choice of evaluative techniques.

Organizational Influences

Just as broad social values shape individual evaluation studies, so specific organizational values may influence evaluations conducted within an organization. Walker (1974) discusses how the role of evaluation in educational research and development agencies is influenced by alternative structural, organizational, and managerial options. Different types of organizations consider different forms of methodology more or less appropriate. Schmidtlein (1974) lists several "value orientation dilemmas" which he uses to describe the value orientations of common organizational decision-making processes. One can expect these organizational values to be represented in the evaluation work of organizational members.

Indeed, there is empirical evidence to suggest a relationship between organizational values and the values held by individual staff members. In studying chemists, Hinrichs (1972) found that eight years after attaining their doctorates, chemists who worked in industrial research differed significantly in their profession-oriented values from chemists who worked in academic settings, even when the two groups were equated in terms of their prevailing values upon attaining their doctorates. Hinrichs draws the implication that differential changes occurred in these two groups as a result of their exposure to separate environments. He notes that even chemists who changed settings (that is, went from an academic to an industrial environment or vice versa) changed some of their values in order to be more consistent with the average value patterns of their new colleagues.

> This study has illustrated that the phenomenon of accommodation or acculturation in values does exist during the course of a scientist's early career, and that such acculturation is to some extent dependent upon the working environment into which the scientist enters. (p. 563)

In an empirical investigation of the relationship between values of educational personnel and their position in organizational hierarchies, Hodgkinson (1970) found that values and organizational position are clearly related. Evidence suggests that an individual's values change

with progression through the ranks of an organizational hierarchy. As Hodgkinson notes, it is not clear whether personnel change their values because of promotions, or that those personnel with what he calls "flexibility of orientation" are more likely to be promoted.

There is some indication, therefore, that differences in organizational values will be reflected in evaluation studies. Furthermore, as personnel in educational organizations shift levels within a hierarchy, their values with respect to evaluation may significantly shift. Thus, judgments of the quality, utility, and relevance of particular evaluation activities may vary considerably as one surveys across educational research and development agencies, state education agencies, university-based evaluation centers, and local school districts, as a result of differences in organizational values.

Values as Demand Characteristics

Many values operate directly and visibly on evaluation study decisions, clearly suggesting which procedures are most desirable. Other more tacit values exert a subtle influence on the formation of evaluation studies. In many respects these more subtle values in the evaluation context can be thought of as "demand characteristics" of the evaluation enterprise, in much the same respect as Orne (1972) discusses the demand characteristics of the experimental setting. Orne defines demand characteristics as the sum total of the cues which suggest to the experimental subject what behaviors are expected or desired.

> It is perhaps best to think of the perceived demand characteristics as a contextual variable in the experiment situation... It should be clear that demand characteristics cannot be eliminated from experiments; all experiments will have demand characteristics, and these will always have some effect. (p. 779)

Similarly, various values within the context of an evaluation act as strong demand characteristics, cueing the evaluator to expected or desired behaviors. These values may have little direct relation to the actual product or program being evaluated, but nonetheless have a considerable impact on the definition of evaluation and the activities pursued by evaluation personnel. For example, a program long beleaguered by external criticism and lack of support might desire

that a newly hired internal evaluator adopt a highly positive and supportive stance toward the program. The evaluator may be expected to evidence his or her commitment to the welfare of the program before even the mildest criticism will be accepted by the program staff. If the evaluator chooses the role of providing credible and helpful feedback to the program, then his or her interpersonal behaviors, reporting strategies, and perhaps even data collection procedures will be significantly affected by the program expectation that he or she appear highly supportive. In another situation the program administrator might surreptitiously use evaluation activities to fulfill a management function of keeping program development efforts on a strict timeline. Such a demand characteristic might influence the evaluator to engage more heavily in progress monitoring, administrative feedback, and program planning than might otherwise be the case. Subtle values, operating as cues to desired behavior (demand characteristics) can therefore determine which activities are finally selected as appropriate in a particular evaluation study.

An Illustration: Evaluation Purposes

Before leaving the topic of how contextual values influence the conduct of evaluation studies, consider one final illustration. This example demonstrates how the purpose of an evaluation study can be portrayed as the result of several contextually influenced value judgments: specifically, judgments about

- what to evaluate (the <u>focus</u> of the evaluation),
- who is to benefit from the evaluation (the <u>audience</u> of the evaluation), and
- what the evaluation is to be used for (the <u>evaluation use</u>).

Several years ago Scriven (1967) discussed the distinction between the goals and roles of evaluation. He defined the goal of evaluation to be the gathering and combining of performance data with a weighted set of goal scales to yield either comparative or numerical ratings of worth.

> But the <u>role</u> which evaluation has in a particular educational context may be enormously various; it may form part of a teacher training activity, of the process of curriculum development, of a field experiment connected with the improvement of learning theory. (pp. 40-41)

The term "purpose" is used here, for, although it is meant to be synonymous with Scriven's definition of "role," it does appear to be a more commonly used term than "role" in much of the evaluation literature.

Many purposes for evaluation have been proffered: evaluation for program planning, program improvement, or program justification (Brophy et al., 1974), evaluation to determine what procedures are effective with what kinds of students and under what circumstances (Hastings, 1966; Rutherford, 1971), evaluation to aid in development by assisting with administrative decisions (Stufflebeam et al., 1971), evaluation to aid in understanding empirical relationships in order to enable revisions (Cronbach, 1963), evaluation to help developers be accountable to their many publics (Gooler and Groteluеschen, 1971), evaluation to provide for public accountability (Merriman, 1971), and evaluation to fulfill obligatory requirements (House, 1973a). These different purposes for evaluation result in different designs, methodologies, and evaluation approaches being used.

Hemphill (1969), for example, states that the worth of an evaluation study depends upon its contribution to a rational decision-making process in situations where it is necessary to estimate the probability of desirable, but uncertain, outcomes of action chosen from several alternatives. This argument presumes that the primary purpose of the evaluation is to serve decision-making. However, contributions to decision-making would not be a major criterion for an evaluation designed to serve public accountability or to provide a fuller understanding of empirical relationships.

Evaluation work is initiated presumably because there is an interest in using evaluative activities to produce some desired outcome, whether an information product or a situational change. In some cases the outcomes of evaluation work result as much from the evaluative process itself, and its reactive nature, as from any informational product resulting from evaluation data. An <u>evaluation</u> may be put to <u>use</u> in a variety of ways. Evaluations can be used to influence program planning, control, refinement (doing a better job in the same direction), revision (choosing new directions), continuation, justification, validation, monitoring, accountability,

communication, or understanding. Which of these uses is finally selected in an evaluation study is the result of a series of value judgments based on the dominance of various contextually relevant values.

The values of audience groups also influence the form of evaluation studies. There are at least five primary audiences in most educational evaluation studies: the program producer/developer, funder, evaluator, target group/user, and purchaser/consumer. Other related parties which also may be relevant audiences include teachers, school administrators, school professional staff (coaches, librarians, counselors), state agencies, federal agencies, community groups, society in general, special interest or ad hoc groups, academic content experts, universities, parents, and researchers. Since the evaluation study is to benefit one or more of these groups, their information needs, interests, and basic values must be considered throughout the conduct of the evaluation.

Finally, the choice of evaluation focus, that is the specific program components to be evaluated, is usually the result of basic value judgments of what constitute the most significant elements of the program. Although most studies focus on instructional outcomes, other foci such as managerial structure, dissemination capabilities and instructional content are also possible.

By portraying the purpose of an evaluation study as a combination of focus, audience, and evaluation use, as displayed in Table 1, the ways in which basic value positions influence the definition of a particular study become more apparent.

Note the similarity between the last two purposes listed in Table 1:

- An evaluation of instructional outcomes for the benefit of researchers for use in understanding how to better teach the content area.
- An evaluation of instructional outcomes for the benefit of the public for use in increasing the awareness of program activities.

Table 1: Alternative Purposes for an Evaluation Study

An Evaluation of	(FOCUS)	For the Benefit of	(AUDIENCE)	For use in	(EVALUATION USE)
	management style		the funding agency		monitoring the program
	budgetary affairs		the public		assessing accountability
	instructional content		the program development staff		revising the materials
	implementation strategies		the program development staff		planning dissemination activities
	implementation strategies		product purchasers		making purchasing decisions
	instructional outcomes		researchers		understanding how to better teach the content area
	instructional outcomes		the public		increasing the awareness of program activity

Both focus on instructional outcomes, but for different audiences who make different uses of the evaluation (generalizable understanding versus general awareness). Since these audience groups have different interests to be served by an evaluation, different types of evaluation studies will be necessary to respond to their respective needs. Selecting one of these groups as a primary audience entails a value judgment, and once a selection is made, that group's values become more influential in the conduct of the evaluation work.

Evaluations seldom, if ever, have a single purpose. Different audiences are usually interested in different components of a program for different reasons. Furthermore, it is not necessary that evaluators consciously consider purposes in conducting evaluation studies (cf. March, 1972). However, by considering an evaluation's purpose and the types and sources of values relevant to various purposes, as illustrated in Table 1, one can more readily comprehend the impact of social values on evaluation activities.

THE EVALUATOR AS A SOURCE OF VALUES

Values which influence evaluation studies not only arise from the contexts within which such studies are conducted, they are also inserted into the evaluation enterprise by evaluators themselves. Such values are evident in evaluation terminology, evaluation models, and in the personal preferences of individual evaluators.

Values Hidden in Terminology

Values that impinge on the conduct of evaluation work can be seen in the terminology and paradigms used in evaluation studies. Since evaluation is, at least partly, a scientific activity, a brief look at values in science is pertinent. Rudner (1973) argues that scientists cannot avoid making value judgments in their work; the scientific method intrinsically requires the making of value judgments and value decisions. Gunnar Myrdal (1969) has provided an excellent discussion of how subjectivity and bias enter into all social research.

> This implicit belief in the existence of a body of scientific knowledge acquired independently of all valuations I soon found to be naive empiricism. (p. 9)

Myrdal says that scientific work requires questions which are expressions of our interest in the world and are, therefore, valuations. Values are involved as one observes facts, carries on theoretical analyses, and makes inferences.

Myrdal notes that social scientists are apt to conceal conflicts between valuations by stating their positions as simply logical inferences from observed facts. Since they suppress valuations as valuations and give only "reasons," their perception of reality easily becomes distorted or biased. Scientists (and evaluators) cannot avoid bias by stopping short of practical or political conclusions, since such conclusions are sure to be drawn anyway, not as inferences from explicit value premises, but as supposedly evident from the nature of things, as part of the objective data.

> Biases are thus not confined to the practical and political conclusions drawn from research. They are much more deeply seated than that. They are the unfortunate results of concealed valuations that insinuate themselves into research at all stages, from its planning to its final presentation. As a result of their concealment, they are not properly sorted out and can thus be kept undefined and vague. (Myrdal, 1969, p. 52)

Myrdal argues that the only way scientific inquiry can be objective is for value premises to be made explicit.

According to Myrdal, "terminological escapism" is no solution to the problem of values in research. He suggests that there is nothing wrong per se with value-loaded concepts if they are clearly defined in terms of explicitly stated value premises. If they are not so defined, and the implied valuations are therefore concealed, they provide entry for bias. Inventing new terms is no solution since new terms only give a false sense of security and serve to deceive the public. Valuations must be made explicit. Research can be made objective by allowing others to challenge scientific investigations on the basis of their explicit value premises or to reconduct the studies, substituting different value premises.

Others, like Passmore (1973), have addressed the problem of terminological bias, arguing that scientific-sounding words like "efficiency" often disguise value judgments, and that seemingly factual statements often imply value judgments or even formulation of social policies. He maintains that scientists sometimes profess to be giving merely technical advice when they are actually assuming certain value positions and espousing particular policy decisions. Passmore argues that a social science must be aware of the value judgments in its work and that

> a positive social science must be value-free in the sense that it is not social advocacy in disguise, but not in the sense that it has nothing to say about values. (p. 523)

Hooper (1968) reminds us that even "common virtues" such as clear thinking, precise expression, unambiguous language, and being certain, are still only value statements or value preferences. Any virtue or judgment criterion is only a value preference; there may be competing value positions which are equally reputable.

Hidden values in neutral-sounding terminology plague evaluation as well as other scientifically based enterprises. In reviewing the Phi Delta Kappa report on evaluation, Scriven (1972) objects to the report's "persuasive definition" of evaluation. He points to the authors' value judgments in defining evaluation to include administrative theory, needs assessment, monitoring, bookkeeping, and so on. He argues that such activities are not direct derivatives of evaluation when defined as neutrally as possible.

Value-Laden Evaluation Models

Just as implied value judgments are hidden in the terms used by evaluators, so are values evident in evaluators' conceptual tools. Values are inherent in the paradigms used in science, and this seems to be especially true with evaluation models.

Individuals writing on the nature and use of models in science (e.g., Black, 1973; Kaplan, 1964) have noted several uses made of the term. Black, for example, discusses how the term "model" has been used in science to denote:

Scale models,

> analogue models in which there is an isomorphic relationship between the model and the original entity,
>
> models which are types or designs of something worthy of imitation, and
>
> theoretical models in which one uses an area better understood in order to solve a particular problem.

The term "models" as typically used in educational evaluation appears to refer to the third definition above; i.e., evaluation models are designs of exemplary processes or procedures.

Evaluation models are not theoretical models since they lack explanatory and predictive features. They are more properly considered as exemplars of desirable or commendable operating procedures, and are best viewed as alternative, descriptive conceptualizations of evaluation processes. Black describes such a use of models as a "convenience of exposition...which may also help us to notice what otherwise may be overlooked, to shift the relative emphasis attached to details--in short, to see new connections" (p. 496). Evaluation models, therefore, represent competing conceptualizations of appropriate evaluation procedures; each model is based on differing assumptions and values concerning the evaluation process itself.

Evaluation models are not always accepted as value-based exemplars suitable for heuristic use, but are sometimes viewed as objective methodological procedures (Smith and Murray, 1975). Obvious problems arise when enthusiasts for a particular model lose sight of the value-based nature of their paradigm and approach the use of the model as a "scientific" and value-free activity.

House (1973d) notes that

> as with other technologies, the technology of evaluation has shaped the minds of those who use it, the evaluators. Evaluation problems are automatically reduced to testing problems and to problems of measuring objectives. If the evaluator chances to cast the problem differently, he finds that this new formulation is perceived as illegitimate, uneconomical, and unacceptable. Even slight deviations in instrumentation are controlled by the norms of "reliability" and "validity." Powerful institutional forms have grown up around the technology as devices for

> maintaining the status quo...The governmental agencies accept only "hard" data. (p. 21)

House is arguing against the underlying values of a currently prevalent approach to evaluation. He asserts that other social values should be dominant and should direct evaluation work: that means-ends paradigms should be distrusted and "more trust [be] placed in the evaluator to respond as a human being, as a critical intellect, less on technique. He [should look] for natural patterns rather than trying to control" (p. 23). House proposes that evaluation ought to be opposed to the following values:

> componentiality: reality can be easily separated into neat components,
>
> multirelationality: an individual can be fragmented into all the relationships he must maintain in the society,
>
> makeability: problems can always be solved, and
>
> progressivity: it is desirable to maximize the benefits of any action.

Whether or not one agrees with House, it is clear that value positions play a fundamental role in the selection of evaluative approaches.

An Evaluator's Personal Values

There are often considerable differences between the values of an evaluator and the values of the individuals he works with and for. These value differences, whether made explicit or not, can influence the nature of the evaluation work as it unfolds. Several authors have stressed the need for greater attention to the personal values of the participants in evaluation activities.

House (1973c), in discussing the value differences between evaluators and clients, says,

> there is a natural antipathy between change and evaluation, often unrecognized by the evaluator and client alike. Changing something requires a faith, a belief in the new program beyond any data. To the client, evaluation means a confirmation of what he knows to be true. Evaluating something means being skeptical, suspending belief. But the evaluator has a faith of his own--that the client will change as a result of the evaluation. (pp. 256-257)

Similarly, Weiss (1973) cautions evaluators to remember that administrators are frequently as much or more concerned with building and maintaining an organization as they are with seeing that program goals are met. She argues that evaluators must realize that maximizing program effectiveness is only one of the many values that enter into the politically oriented decisions made by administrators, and into which evaluation feeds information.

> Accomplishing the goals for which the program was set up is not unimportant, but it is not the only, the largest, or usually the most immediate of the concerns on the administrator's docket. (p. 38)

Weiss notes that whereas the evaluator wants to study the effects of a stable and specifiable stimulus, the program administrator wishes to make the best possible adaptations to changing contextual conditions.

Because evaluation is a reformist movement of social science evaluators who are often more liberal in orientation than the programs they study, the evaluators' perspectives inevitably affect the nature of their studies. Serious value conflicts surface when the evaluator follows Scriven's (1972) advice to examine and critique the client's objectives and values. Scriven claims that it is necessary that the evaluator act as a conscience as well as a consultant to the effort being evaluated. But Scriven warns that the evaluator must also reveal his own values.

Berlak (1970) stresses the critical necessity of evaluators' making their own values clear because of their frequent role as moral judges.

> Though we cannot survive without experts, they can also do us in. I am suspicious of immodest experts; experts by virtue of their expertise certainly do not possess superior moral values. Critics of democracy have long pointed out that the hazard of a democratic system is that the people may not choose the wisest men to govern. This unhappy consequence disturbs me less than the expert who presumes he knows best what is good for society. (p. 277)

An evaluator's values can affect many aspects of an evaluation study including its design, data collection strategy, data analysis, and reporting. Barber (1973) has enumerated nine different effects, such as loose protocols, misrecording errors, and unintentional expectancy, which may result from the values of individuals conducting research studies. Barber's review of the research on experimenter expectancy

effects illustrates that this problem is more pervasive than is generally thought. Finally, Werts and Linn (1969) have shown that even the choice of particular regression analysis procedures can be influenced by the hypothesis one wishes to support; that is, the value position of the evaluator. These potential bias effects are always present in evaluation studies, and provide mechanisms by which the personal values of evaluators can affect evaluation results.

An Illustration: Evaluator Roles

As one final illustration of the influence of values in evaluation work, consider how the role of an evaluator in a particular study can be portrayed as the result of several value judgments concerning

- what is the purpose of the study (purpose),
- to what audience group does the evaluator owe prime allegiance (allegiance group), and
- what stance is the evaluator taking in relation to the program's worth (posture).

Of the audiences previously discussed, those of interest here are the audience groups to whom the evaluator feels allegiance or in whose interest he feels his work is being conducted. For instance, an evaluator may feel that his prime responsibility is to aid the program development staff, or to provide a monitoring function to the funding agency, or to protect the interests of a particular consumer group. One of these audiences thus becomes the evaluator's allegiance group. (There has been discussion as to whether evaluators ought to be employed internally or externally to the program being evaluated. The considerations of internality/externality usually concern the degree of cooptation and allegiance reflected in the evaluator's work. Since funding and employer relationships do not necessarily dictate allegiance, it seems more useful to consider allegiance directly rather than internal or external funding arrangements.)

The posture of an evaluator refers to whether or not the evaluator is attempting to take a neutral, positive, or negative stance toward the program being evaluated. Useful evaluations may be conducted by evaluators who have either positive or negative attitudes towards a program, provided such biases are made public, taken into consideration as one reviews the evaluation work, and counterbalanced by views from

alternative perspectives. (Such a view is consistent with Myrdal's (1969) view, which argues that there is no such thing as objectivity except insofar as it refers to particular value biases being made explicit and public.)

Using purpose, allegiance group, and posture, one can easily enumerate various stereotypic evaluator roles as indicated by the examples below:

Evaluator Role	Purpose	Allegiance Group	Posture
researcher	understanding	content specialists	neutral
auditor	monitor	funder	neutral
co-worker	program refinement	program staff	positive
consumer protector	accountability	potential users	negative
certifier	validation	society	neutral

These examples are meant to be illustrative only. Whether a consumer protector role should be played from a neutral or negative stance is not the point here. What is of interest is that an evaluator's role can be seen as the result of a series of value judgments about which group to serve, what stance to take, and what the primary purpose of the evaluation ought to be.

VALUES CLARIFICATION IN EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

Benefits and Problems of Values

Values certainly pervade every aspect of evaluation work and arise from a multitude of sources, from social movements to the evaluator's personal opinions. It is fortunate that since such values are inescapable, they are also beneficial. Value positions help to define and delineate an evaluation problem and, to a large extent, to determine its practical significance for particular audiences. Furthermore, although evaluation terminology and methods are value laden, they are essential tools. There is obvious utility in the simplifying nature of models. Models, and especially their underlying values, help to reduce complexity and provide decision-making mechanisms by which an overwhelming number of alternatives can be managed in conducting an

evaluation study. The value dimensions of models help delineate what one will look at and how it will be described. Such models serve a useful function of simplification.

Difficulties do arise, however, in evaluation studies where the values influencing the results are not clear and explicit, and the evaluative research is therefore portrayed or viewed as something other than it actually is. In many studies, pluralistic values, and the resultant countervailing forces, complicate the evaluation work. Various audience groups advocate different objectives as the "true" purpose of the evaluation study and pressure evaluators into "hatchetman" or "whitewash" roles. Other individuals attempt to shift the initial focus of the evaluation study from, for example, student outcomes to personnel adequacy. Under such circumstances, evaluators are often hard pressed to identify the various interest groups and values being promoted, and to understand how such values may be affecting the direction of the evaluation work. They need a means of dealing with such influential values.

Ways to Clarify Values

Although relatively little has been done to help the practitioner cope with competing value systems, four approaches to dealing with values can be tentatively identified in the evaluation literature. All the approaches are primarily designed to clarify different value positions on the presumption that it is the lack of awareness of value positions, rather than the value positions themselves, that presents the greatest difficulty in evaluative inquiry.

The first approach simply suggests that all relevant value positions need to be identified and stated publicly. House (1973a), for example, echoes Myrdal's (1969) argument for values explication and urges that

> making evaluations explicit demonstrates the evaluator's awareness of them, forces him to account for them, and exposes them for what they are. Ideally, one would use alternative sets of values to judge a program. (House, 1973a, p. 131)

House concedes that there are seldom sufficient resources available to use multiple value perspectives, and so one is usually forced to choose a particular set of valuations and to utilize resources according to

that perspective. But, he argues, these steps should be taken publicly so that the valuations chosen are neither hidden nor arbitrary, and so that they can be judged for their relevance and significance by the audiences involved. This approach emphasizes making public all hidden valuations.

The second approach emphasizes the need to clarify the evaluator's role in the evaluative process. Berlak (1970) suggests three different positions an evaluator may take with regard to making value judgments about the worth of a program being assessed: the evaluator may (a) only describe the program, (b) recommend judgment criteria, or (c) render an actual judgment of worth. The evaluator may thus choose, to some degree, how influential his or her values will be in the final assessment of worth. Of course, if the evaluator chooses to de-emphasize his or her personal values, the questions of whose values are being influential remains open.

The third approach suggests explicitly incorporating opposed values into evaluation studies by conducting comparative analyses. Such studies might employ tests of critical competitors (Scriven, 1974) and political benefit analysis.

> Just as economic cost-benefit analysis added the vital dimension of cost to the analysis of outcomes, political-benefit analysis might help to resolve questions about political benefits and foregone opportunities. (Weiss, 1973, p. 40)

The fourth approach reflects attempts to actively search out conflicting value positions to insure an appreciation of the full range of potentially influential values. Asking certain groups to be public about their values is part of this process, but to keep these self-disclosures in perspective, other groups who advocate counter positions are likewise sought and heard. The interplay of multiple values provides a stronger means of values regulation than only making explicit statements of one position. In fact, publically including multiple value positions may ease the evaluator's moral burden by shifting his or her position from that of judge to arbitrator (Brickell, 1976). Examples of this approach include adversary procedures (Levine, 1974) and portrayal evaluations (Stake, 1975). This fourth approach emphasizes the use of multiple value perspectives in order to achieve a

fuller understanding of the educational program, while the third approach emphasizes procedures which test the dominance of one value position over another.

These various approaches to dealing with values in evaluation work provide important first steps, but much work remains to be done. Currently the evaluation profession lacks (a) a suitable theory of value related to evaluative inquiry, (b) procedural guidelines for dealing with values in applied settings, and (c) an empirical base indicating the impact and role of values in evaluative work. Having identified some of the important sources of values in evaluative inquiry, perhaps work can proceed with a little clearer map of the terrain.

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